

shall be whether this Order should be sustained.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202(c)(2)(i), Mr. McGriff may, in addition to demanding a hearing, at the time the answer is filed or sooner, move the presiding officer to set aside the immediate effectiveness of the Order on the ground that the Order, including the need for immediate effectiveness, is not based on adequate evidence but on mere suspicion, unfounded allegations, or error.

In the absence of any request for hearing, or written approval of an extension of time in which to request a hearing, the provisions specified in Section IV above shall be final 20 days from the date of this Order without further order or proceedings. If an extension of time for requesting a hearing has been approved, the provisions specified in Section IV shall be final when the extension expires if a hearing request has not been received. An answer or a request for hearing shall not stay the immediate effectiveness of this order.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 23rd day of February 1998.

Ashok C. Thadani,

Acting Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Effectiveness.

[FR Doc. 98-5711 Filed 3-4-98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425]

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al.; Notice of Withdrawal of Application for Amendments to Facility Operating Licenses

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has granted the request of Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al. (the licensee), to partially withdraw its May 1, 1995, application for proposed amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-68 and NPF-81 for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP), Unit Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, located at the licensee's site in Burke County, Georgia. The May 1, 1995, application was supplemented by letters dated August 3 and 9, September 22, November 20 and December 21, 1995, January 26 and 30, February 19 and 29, March 5 and 12, May 6, June 17, August 23, and September 13, 1996.

The proposed amendments would have revised the Technical Specifications (TS) related to allowed

outage times for the Containment Spray and Cooling Systems, TS 3.6.6.

The Commission had previously issued a Notice of Consideration of Issuance of Amendments published in the **Federal Register** on September 7, 1995 (60 FR 46633). However, by letter dated February 17, 1998, the licensee withdrew the proposed change.

For further details with respect to this action, see the application for amendment dated May 1, 1995, and the supplements previously stated, and the licensee's letter dated February 17, 1998, which partially withdrew the application for license amendments. The above documents are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Burke County Library, 412 Fourth Street, Waynesboro, Georgia.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 27th day of February 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

David H. Jaffe,

Senior Project Manager, Project Directorate II-2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50-254 and 50-265]

Commonwealth Edison Company and Midamerican Energy Company (Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2); Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an exemption from certain requirements of its regulations to Facility Operating License Nos. DPR-29 and DPR-30, issued to Commonwealth Edison Company (the licensee), for operation of the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station, Units 1 and 2, located in Rock Island County, Illinois.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would exempt the licensee from the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24, which requires in each area in which special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored a monitoring system that will energize clear audible alarms if accidental criticality occurs. The proposed action would also exempt the licensee from the requirements to

maintain emergency procedures for each area in which this licensed special nuclear material is handled, used, or stored to ensure that all personnel withdraw to an area of safety upon the sounding of the alarm, to familiarize personnel with the evacuation plan, to designate responsible individuals for determining the cause of the alarm, and to place radiation survey instruments in accessible locations for use in such an emergency.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensees' application for exemption dated October 27, 1997.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of 10 CFR 70.24 is to ensure that if a criticality were to occur during the handling of special nuclear material, personnel would be alerted to that fact and would take appropriate action. At a commercial nuclear power plant, the inadvertent criticality with which 10 CFR 70.24 is concerned could occur during fuel handling operations. The special nuclear material that could be assembled into a critical mass at a commercial nuclear power plant is in the form of nuclear fuel; the quantity of other forms of special nuclear material that is stored onsite in any given location is small enough to preclude achieving a critical mass. Because the fuel is not enriched beyond 5.0 weight percent uranium-235, and because commercial nuclear plant licensees have procedures and features that are designed to prevent inadvertent criticality, the staff has determined that it is unlikely that an inadvertent criticality could occur due to the handling of special nuclear material at a commercial power reactor. Therefore, the requirements of 10 CFR 70.24 are not necessary to ensure the safety of personnel during the handling of special nuclear materials at commercial power reactors.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that inadvertent or accidental criticality will be precluded through compliance with the Quad Cities Technical Specifications, the design of the fuel storage racks providing geometric spacing of fuel assemblies in their storage locations, and administrative controls imposed on fuel handling procedures.

The proposed exemption would not result in an increase in the probability or consequences of accidents, affect radiological plant effluents, or cause any significant occupational exposures. Therefore, there are no radiological